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Margaret G. Fawcett
Rosemary - 1909-13

"MARIA MITCHELL"

First American Woman Astronomer.

A play in three Acts by -

Margaret Georgia Fawcett.

(As produced at Straight Wharf Theatre, Nantucket Island,
Mass. - July 1950.)

Address -

Straight Wharf Theatre
Nantucket Island,
Mass. -

Act II } Missing
Scene - 1 }

" MARIA MITCHELL "

by - Margaret Georgia Fawcett.

Characters

Maria Mitchell -----
William Mitchell - (her father)
Lydia Mitchell - (her mother)
Phoebe Mitchell - (her sister)
Anne Mitchell - (another sister)
Andrew Mitchell → (her brother)
Jared Hussey
Hannah Hussey
Eunice Hathaway - (the Hussey's neice)
John Bolton
Emily Stoddard - (student at Vassar College)
Fanny Tillsbury (student at Vassar College)
Mrs. Cantwell
Patience Bunker children
Deborah Swain

ACT I

Scene 1 - The Mitchell Library in the Pacific Bank
Building in Nantucket - 1843
Scene 2 - The same a few weeks later .

ACT II

Scene 1 - The same as Act I, - 1847
Scene 2 - The Atheneum , two years later - 1849

ACT III

Scene 1 - The Dome Room in the Observatory at Vassar
College - 1850
Scene 2 - The same , four years later.

"Maria Mitchell" is an authentic play ,based on the life of
America's first woman astronomer, who was born on Nantucket
Island and whose home still stands ,on Vestal Street.

"MARIA MITCHELL"

ACT I.

Acene I.

The Mitchel Library is comfortable furnished - It is the downstairs room in the back of the bank building. It has two doors in the rear wall-- Right and Left. The Left one leads to the hall-. In the hall are the stairs and the front door neither of which can be plainly seen. There is a large window in each wall Right and Left. William's desk is in front of window Right- a large sofa is next to wall at back Center.

A table is in the middle of the room and chairs on either side. - there is chair under the window at Left- and a foot-stool near-by. A small table and mirror is seen in hall through door left. ~~And firexxxandxfireplacexfender~~
~~xxxxxxat foot-xlights, center-xfrontx~~

When curtain rises the three girls- Maria-Phebe and Anne are standing Center Right with their heads to-gether. Maria is a determined courageous young woman of twenty-five- with a good head on her shoulders which she uses. Phebe is less determined but thoughtful and kindly and little younger than Maria- and Anne is still younger. She is more timid than the others but of a loyal and affectionate nature.

Maria -- (In a low voice)

Now Anne, the plan is for thee to take thy place in the Hall upstairs - and at the signal from Phebe thee is to begin. I will stand watch here and tell Phebe when they reach the door.

Anne - I suddenly feel a little frightened.

~~Maria~~ - Have thee not the courage of thy conviction, Anne.

Phebe - (To Anne) I presume likely we have been over-bold but

Maria will make it right with father.

Anne - 'Tis ^{of} Mother's anger I am afeard.

(Slam of outside door)

Phebe - They're home already! -

(Squeals from Anne. ~~She and Phebe start for door~~ ^{Right})

(Maria goes to ^{window} ~~door~~ Left and opens it -)

Maria - 'Tis but Andrew.

Phebe - Don't tell Andrew ~~before Mother and Father know!~~

Anne - No - no! - please don't, sister!

(Anne hurries out past Andrew into hall) Exit Anne)

Andrew - (Coming in with paper under his arm - to table - Enter)

What has put Anne in such a flax? - You three girls seem to have something brewing. Could that be why Mother and Father have stayed so late at Sally's.

Maria - Why does thee think we are up to anything, Andrew?

And ~~why~~ shouldn't father and Mother stay to tea with our sister at her new home.

(Maria has gone to chair by window ^{Left} and picked up her tatting)

Andrew - (As he sits - Right of table and opens his paper)

Where are the rest?

Phebe - (Who has sat - trying to knit - at Left of table)

William Foster and Henry are at Uncle Peleg's and 'tis Catharine's bed hour.

~~Andrew~~ - (Looks again from one to the other)

I still say ther's mischief brewing - best tell me?

Maria - Did thee do my errand for me, Andrew? Whom did thee meet in the Square?

Andrew - Thee is but trying to put me off, Maria-

Maria - (Going on) Like as not George Riddel hailed thee from
the door-way of his ^{store} - and presumed likely there'd
be fog to-night - and I presume likely there will be -
(Looking out window) and there'll be no sweeping of the
heavens for me!

Andrew - (With a twinkle)

Thee is still trying to put me off, Maria. I know thy ways.
I'll get Phebe to tell me.

Phebe - (A little frightened)

Thee'll not be pleased Andrew- If I do tell thee.

(Enter Anne)
Anne - (Coming in quickly talking as she comes)

My fingers are stiff from waiting - I'll not be able to
play a note!

Andrew - Play? What - pray?

Anne - Mercy on us! I forgot Andrew!

Maria - We have had Anne's piano moved into the house, Andrew
There - thee knows now!

Andrew - That musical instrument inside our house? But when?

Maria - Not a half hour ago.

Phebe - It took six men to carry it up to the Big Hall.

They had such a time getting it up the stairs.

Anne - But Maria payed them well.

Andrew - So! I see why thee sent me to the Wharf with Captain Folger's
chronometer when to-morrow would have done as well. And
thee arranged with Sally to ask Mother and Father for tea,
I'll wager.

Maria - Thee would not be following the Discipline if thee wagers,
Andrew!

Andrew - (Sternly)

Thee must not take this matter lightly, Maria. Thee has done wrong and thee knows it! If I misstay not, Mother and Father will be sore displeased with thee and it will cost thee as much money again to have the instrument removed.

Anne - (Distressed) -Oh dear- what shall we do!

Maria - I doubt there will be need to have it removed.

I am convincēd that once father finds it is in the house he will be as pleased as ever we are. 'Twill be none of his doing - and who can say nay to him then?

Andrew - But here in the bank building where everyone up and down Main Street and on the Square can hear it - what can thee be thinking of. Why it might even cost father his position as cashier of the bank - and then where would we be.

Phebe - Oh - dear - where would we be! We couldn't go back to Vestal Street with Uncle Peleg and the cousins there now.

Andrew - (Shaking his head) Thee has surely made a mux of it, Maria!

Anne - It is not all Maria's doing, she but gave me help and advice because I asked her.

Andrew - She is the oldest of you three and she has taken on the laboring oar, if I misstay not. Anne-why was thee not content to leave the instrument in the shed outside, where it was less likely to come to the notice of the Elders.

Anne - The dampness was bad for the keys and almost ruined the tone.

Phebe - And anyhow we want it in the Hall where everyone gathers and we can sit about and sing!

Andrew - Sing to the Accompaniment of a piano just like the
World's people? -

Maria - Besides, Anne has shivered long enough trying to practice
in that unheated place outside.

Andrew - What makes it necessary for Anne to pursue such a frivolous
pastime as music? If she ~~would~~ spend her time, as other
young girls of her age, sewing and -

Maria - (Breaks in)

"Stitch ! Stitch! - I ~~would~~ rather put a girl alone in a
closet to meditate as give her only the society of her needle!
The needle is the chain of woman and has fettered her more
than the laws of the country!"

Andrew - Indeed! - Well - I would say that thee also wastes a deal
of thy time with thy nightly sweeping of the heavens, Maria,
that might be put to more seemly occupations, especially
if thee does not wish always to be unmarried.

Maria - (Grandly) If there are no men in this world who will admit
that a woman should not be barred from the contemplation and
pursuit of the universal truths then I should consider myself
better off unmarried.

Andrew There thee goes, Maria - thee is becoming more "Quinty"
everyday!

Maria - (A little hurt) And what if I am an old maid all my life
Andrew! Not everyone has the good fortune to find their
true mate.

Phebe - (Standing up for her Sister)

Thee has not yet done so well for thyself, brother.-

Thee's older than Maria - and, as far as we know, Eliza Swain
has not yet consented to stand-up-in-meeting with thee!

Andrew - (Flustered) - Well- I-

(Scuffling on steps outside is heard)

Phebe * (Rising quickly)

There's Mother and Father now! Be quick Anne!

(Anne scurries out)

(Knock on door with knocker)

Maria - 'Tis not so. 'Tis a caller. Thee see to the door Andrew

(She sits- takes up her tatting - Phebe to
her knitting - Andrew has gone to hall- half
shutting hall door)

Phebe - (Whispers to Maria)

Whatever will we do if whoever it is, doesn't go, before
Mother and Father come?..! - Mercy me - I'm too wadgetty
to see anyone ! Thee make my excuses Maria!-

(She scurries out Right)

(There is talking outside)

John Bolton - (Off stage -)

Good even Friend Andrew.

Andrew - (off stage -)

Welcome to thee Friend Bolton. Please to come into
the library.

John Bolton - (As he enters) It has been a fair Spring day-
fine and warm. - (Pleased) Ah - Friend Maria- how is
thee ? As I was saying - the days are getting warmer
the lilac's soon will be in bud.

Maria - Our Spring comes late - but it repays us for it's
tardiness. Won't you sit down, Friend Bolton. I
presume likely you have come to see Father and Mother.
They will be returning home soon now.

John - (Sits chair left of table speaks solemnly)
No, Friend Maria- I have come to see thee - if I may
be so bold as to presume thee will receive me.

(Maria's curls bob with surprise. She leans over
her tatting - not knowing for a moment what to say)

(Andrew looks from John to Maria and back - pleased)

Maria - (Recovering herself)
I shall need first to know the purpose of your
visitation before I can judge of your boldness.

Andrew - Well said, Maria!

John - That will come in due course. - But first let me say
how much pleasure I take in finding thee here with thy
tatting this even, instead of being immersed in thy
star gazing.

Maria - (She keeps an eye on the window as she tats)
If it were not for the fog that rolls in these Spring
nights I should be sweeping the heavens to-night as usual.-
Mercury is favorably placed at this season of the year
and I begrudge any ^{lost} opportunity to observe ^{it} him.

Andrew - (With a caustic chuckle)

Do not imagine Maria would stay from her telescope to make conversation with thee, Friend Bolton, nor with anyone, for that matter-- if the stars were visible.

Maria - The heavens do not wait on human sociability. And neither would friend Bolton leave his class-room for conversation, no matter how friendly. 'Tis the same.

John - 'Tis on a matter that has arisen in my class-room that I have some to consult thee.

Maria - (Distinctly pleased)

If you and your pupils are interested in the study of the heavenly bodies I would be well pleased to give of my time whenever possible (~~Looks out window~~) only this evening I -

John - It is not of the stars I would talk - 'Tis of a graver matter. (He has spoken solemnly)

(Maria and Andrew look up wonderingly)

Maria - What could be of more gravity than the knowledge of the heavens ?

John - (Trying to be very stern)

Friend Maria - thee is wiser than thy years in many matters but thee is not always discreet. - Thee has transgressed in speech of late. It is becoming a habit, I fear. It is because on several occasions in recent weeks I have had ~~reason~~ to reprimand thy younger brothers and sister for not using the plain language that I have come to see thee. Only yesterday Henry Mitchel asked - "Friend Bolton will you hear my spelling" ?

Maria --- I trust he said "please" - and that he spelled the word "Quarterly" aright. I had to go over and over that word with him.

John - (Going right on)

And Catharine and William Foster- he with the name of one of our revered leaders - *are often guilty of* ~~he has frequently been caught~~ using *the word* "you". And when I reprimanded him - his answer was "But Maria uses the word you more often than not and says it sounds better than thee outside the home."

Maria --- (Still Tatting.)

Well- doesn't it? - I am sure there are times when "Thee", if not too intimate, at least / has a most awkward sound. I have no ear for music nor am I able to sing - but the music of speech is very apparent to me. And besides - what is the harm in the use of a simple word like "you".

John - It is not for us to question, Friend Maria.

Maria --- (Gives him a pained look.)

Why not? Why should not everyone question everything- How can we know what is right otherwise?

Andrew Thee is a birthright *Friend* Quaker, Maria - how can thee question the interpretation of the book of Discipline.

Maria --- When George Fox started the Society of Friends- he and his followers did not insist upon the strict rules of speech and dress we have now. That is an historical fact.

John - (To Andrew - solemnly - almost patronizingly)

I feel, Andrew - that Friend Maria has been so much occupied with her star-gazing of late that she does not realize the gravity of her harmful example to the young.

Maria - Friend Bolton - has thee been sent by the Elders to deal with me?

Andrew - (Wide eyed and anxious)

Has thee ?-

John - (Ernestly)

No.- I do know, however, the Elders have taken others under dealings for the same offense. No, I have come of my own volition, because for one thing, I know, Friend Maria, thee at one time had a school of thine own and thee should understand what it means to be a good example to the young. - and also - (he coughs) and also- ever since I first came to this Island I have admired thee more than any other female member of our Meeting, and I should not wish to have thee read-out-of-Meeting if it were in my power to prevent it.

Maria - (Moved - after a pause)

I am grateful for any interest you may have in my welfare, Friend Bolton. - But does thee not believe everyone should reason out all matters for himself in the search for truth.

John - But, thee is a woman, Friend Maria. A woman's place is to accept without reasoning.

Maria - I cannot believe that what you say was meant to be. I cannot believe the Almighty willed there should be any realm of the Sciences and the Arts that a woman who is capable should not explore and question as well as a man.

John - Thee is bold in thy thought!

(The girls, Phebe and Anne show their heads around each door- Andrew waves one and then the other back)

Andrew - Thee is right, Friend Bolton, Maria has grown over bold. This very evening she has aided and abetted her sister in bringing into this house a musical instrument; - and that without the knowledge of either our father or our Mother.

Maria - We are waiting now to surprise them!

John - (Aghast)

To surprise thy Father and Mother with a musical instrument ?
But Friend Maria - does thee realize-

Maria - (She breaks in with a twinkle)

"The gravity" of my actions? (then suddenly serious) I realize that in the eyes of the Lord it can be no sin to make music. The birds sing. There is constant rythm in the movements of the stars and planets.

John- But according to the reading of the Discipline-

Maria - (Going on)

I realize too, it is a harmless and even elevating pastime for my sisters by which they may give pleasure to others.

John - But thy father -

Maria - I have seen his face light up innumerable times when he has heard Anne playing from across the garden - and he often asks us to sing of an evening.

John - But - to defy the Elders by bringing it under thy father's roof !

Maria - If my sister is to play the piano at all is it not better to play it openly, under our own roof, than hidden in a shed in the yard.

John - But --

Phebe - (Off Stage --calling)

Maria - they're coming !

Anne - (Off - stage-calling)

Mother and Father'll be here any minute, Maria!

Phebe - We saw them crossing the Square!

Andrew- Now - thee is in for it, Maria!

John - (Rising)

I must make my departure abruptly. Thee will excuse it I know. But it would not be seemly for me to be present when thy father reprimands thee.

Maria - (With a ~~twinkle~~ as she keeps an eye out the window)

Then, thee does not wish to remain ^(and) to endeavor to dissuade him?

John - (With real feeling)

It would be my wish - if I could do so with a clear conscience.

^{rise}
Maria - ~~I~~ I appreciate thy dilemma - And I will promise you -

I will endeavor in the future not to dissuade my brothers
and sisters from the use of the plain language because
you - thee has asked me.

John - I feel thee may yet see the Light for thyself- and I am
thankful. May I call upon thee another time ?

Maria - (Teasingly)

To point out further the error of my ways ?

John - Thee must not think of me always as the school-master and
mentor ! - Good even to thee - Good even to thee Andrew.

Phebe - (~~Coming into hallway~~ *from Right Rear*)

Aren't they here yet, Maria?

(John goes - Andrew sees him out)

~~Maria~~ ^{Andrew} Andrew see if Father and Mother ~~have~~ started up Main Street?

Andrew - (Coming into room)

Yes, they have - and thee'll soon now be sorry for what thee
has done.

(He crosses room and goes back to his paper.)

Maria - ~~Go back to your place Phebe - Tell Anne to play something~~
lively ~~when I give the signal.~~

Phebe - (Goes off - Left) *(Rear) - Oh dear! -*

I don't think she feels at all lively!

Maria - ~~(Goes quickly to window - she sees them, then she crosses~~
~~quickly to door and waves her handkerchief off stage, whispering~~
at the same time)

All right, Phebe - tell Anne to be quick!

(She comes back into room and waits at door - Piano starts
off stage - a very solemn tune is heard - The front door
opens - William and Lydia Mitchel appear in hall first they

Music

stand in hall listening and then come into the room
as Maria backs away.)

William - What may that be?

Maria - (Soothing tone)

Well, Father, we've had the piano brought over.

William - (More surprised than anything else)

Lydia - So thee has ! Well of all things!

(She starts to take off her bonnet and shawl)

(Phebe appears at door Left - apprehensive. The ~~ludicrous~~ tune continues)

Maria - Father - what does thee say? Thee does not think we have done wrong does thee ?

Phebe - (Breaking quickly)

Mother - may we keep it here ? What does thee say, Mother?

Lydia - (The Mother and Father exchange looks - she sees that he wants it to stay)

It will be as thy father says.

(They all look slightly relieved and look at Father)

William - Well, since the piano is thine and thee has already had it brought into the house I see no reason to have it removed.

Andrew - (Irate)

But Father - the Elders -

William - (Ignoring Andrew)

Only, Phebe, - tell that child to play something lively!

(Phebe rushes out elated)

Phebe - Anne - Anne! it's all right! - but thee is to play something lively - father says to!

(At the same time Maria has taken his arm and is smiling

*Lively
Musik*

up at him fondly. He pats her hand and they look at one another understandingly.)

~~(Lydia is putting on her house bonnet)~~

William - (Slowly and quizzically)

I seem to feel this was of thy scheming, daughter?

(Maria nods her curls)

It may not have been wise, ~~daughter,~~ to take the matter in thine own hands but it was at least courageous.

CURTAIN

ACT I.
"MARIA MITCHELL"

Scene II

"Maria Mitchel"

ACT I

Scene II.

Scene -- The same as Scene I.

The Time -- A week or two later.

(The piano is heard in the distance and the chatter of voices)

(Mrs. Mitchel is sitting under the window with her knitting -

William Mitchel comes in from upstairs - he stops in the hall-
listens to the music and then starts to hum a tune - he sees
his wife-)

William - Anne improves in her playing - Does thee not think?

Lydia - (Intent on her knitting)

I would not know -. But she should improve she spends all
her spare time at the instrument.

(William has crossed to his desk at the window - Right.

William - It keeps them all busy playing and singing - it keeps them
out of harm's way. The Hall has become quite a gathering
place. Are all our children up there now?

Lydia - All save Maria. She is not home from the Atheneum.

William I presume likely she stayed on to finish. We have important
observations to make to-night if it remains clear - I trust
the child will not be over-weary.

Lydia - (As she watches-the-pass in her reflecting glass at the window)
She is coming now. Friend Bolton walks with her.
That is the second time this week.

William - He seems to be a conscientious and hard-working young man.

Does thee imagine Maria thinks well of him?

Lydia - I presume likely she does - but How well, it would be hard
to say.

(Maria comes into the hall with bonnet and shawl)

Lydia
Maria - (Calls upstairs from hall)

Anne - ~~Phoebe~~ -! Not so loud with thy playing - I could hear it from across the Square.

Lydia - Thee need not be so loud with thy shouting either, daughter. Thee should have gone to tell thy sisters.

Maria
Maria - Thee is right, ~~Mamma~~ Mother .

Page
(As she takes off her bonnet and shawl wearily)

Lydia - Thee is late from thy tasks.

Maria - Friend Bolton came by to consult me on a mathematical problem and that delayed me.

(She greets her father)

(William goes on with his writing at his desk)

Lydia - Why did not thee ask Friend Bolton to come in with thee when he stopped at the door?

Maria - I did ask him - but he made some excuse. *ask on stool* I think he ~~had~~ heard the piano.

Lydia - Does thee admire Friend Bolton, Maria?

Maria - I admire him, but not his views.

Lydia - One must ^{not} ask too much, of a man.

(Maria sits on stool near her Mother)

Maria - He sees harm in so many things. And he ~~does not~~ ^{never} feel we need to question ~~why~~ ^{now} - or to weigh the causes of things.

Lydia - It is possible daughter that he has not the judgement to do so.-

Maria - Yes, I've been wondering of late. - But I cannot be so concerned with Friend Bolton's views at the moment, ~~Mama~~ ^{Mother}, - There is something else -- it's to do with Father.

(She looks over and sees her father is still at his figures)

Lydia - And what of thy father?

Maria - ~~I~~ I was walking down Centre Street this noon-time and Friend Jared Hussey stopped me and asked ~~me~~ if Father would be at home later this afternoon. - ~~When~~ I said I thought he would be he said very solemnly "he hoped so" as he had to see him on a very grave matter, and he looked at me most sternly. I have thought all afternoon what it could be and can think of nothing but that it must be about the piano.

Lydia - I presume likely it is, Maria. There has been much talk about the matter among the Elders.-

Maria - (Very distressed)

Thee does not believe he is coming to deal with Father?

Lydia - It is probable that he is.

Maria - Oh, but Mother, with you one of the Overseers and Clerk of the Meeting - Thee wouldn't let them set father aside, would ^{thee} you?

Lydia - I could say neither yey or ney in the matter as he is my husband, thee knows that, Maria. And thee knows, also that many of thy father's views and thine do not coincide with the interpretation of the Discipline as most of us see it. That makes it difficult for us all.

Maria - I know, and I wouldn't mind for myself - but I don't think it would be right that Father be-read - out-of-Meeting- and all because he would not deny us girls.

Lydia - ^{thee} You should have thought of that sooner. Did Jared say he was coming by at this hour?

~~Maria~~ - Yes, - on his way home from his shop.-

Lydia - (She rises and crosses to her husband's desk)

(Speaking solemnly)

William, thee is to be visited.-

William - (Looks up)

Yes, Lydia?

Lydia - Maria tells me thee is to be visited by Jared Hussey.

William - Well, I shall be glad to see, Jared.

Lydia - What we mean is, he is coming to deal with thee.

William - Deal with me? - (Slowly as he thinks) So it's to be Jared.

Yes, - well - I have been expecting it might happen. *(Lydia sit)*

Maria - But Father - ^{thee}you'll tell him we'll take the piano out of the house as soon as possible, won't ^{thee}you? We couldn't have ^{thee}you read-out-of-Meeting on account of Anne's piano.

William - On the other hand, daughter - if I feel it is right she should have the piano? - Would thee have me give it up then?

Maria - (Not knowing what to say)

But, Father - thee would not want to-be-read-out-of-Meeting?

William - No, I should not want to be, but one must stick to his course, ^{one}~~thee~~ cannot vere and haul through life. No - I should not want to be read-out - and, it would go hard with thy Mother.

(Knock on door)

Maria - There he is now!

(She goes to window)

Yes, - Do you wish me to remain, Father?

William - No, daughter. This is a matter for me to take care of.

Maria - Yes, Father. (She starts) I shall take care there's no piano playing, while thee's being visited.

Willaim - (Maria exits quickly - ^{near} off left*)

(William follows - crosses hall)

Good day- how is thee, Jared?

Jared - Better, thank ye - William, better.! (He comes into room)

Lydia - Good day, Jared - thee is welcome.

Jared - (Peppery)

Well, well, Lydia - we shall see how welcome I am when thee knows my errand. I have talk with William. Yes,- grave talk - on a weighty matter.

Lydia - (With outward severity) ~~as she crosses to door Right)~~

Would thee be making a pun, Jared?

Jared - Not by intention, Lydia. But now that thee brings **it** to my attention I have heard tell that it took six men to carry the devil's instrument up thy stairs. - 'Tis to be wondered how many it would take to carry up the Devil himself.

Lydia - It has been known to take many to cast him out.

(^{Pause}) (She exits Right)

William - It takes a strong man to down him - we know that.

Jared - Is thee strong enough to do so, William? For the Devil is tempting thee sorely, **if** I misstay not. And I have been sent to deal with thee.

William - Yes, - Jared?

Jared - It is known thee has a piano in thy house, Willaim.-

William - My daughters have.

Jared - But it is thy house.

William - Yes, but my home is my children's as well as mine and I propose that they shall not be obliged to go away from home for their pleasures. I don't play on the piano.

Jared - But thee listens?

William- I also listen to the song of the birds - to the music of the wind in the trees.

Jared - (Disconcerted)

Yes - yes, - well - that can't be helped - that can't be helped ! But thee knows full well, William, what the Discipline says regarding the playing of musical instruments and of dancing and singing.-

William - I know also, Jared - that times are changing and to keep our young people from wandering afield too much we must be more liberal in our views. Music, Nor even dancing is not frowned upon in the Bible and what harm does thee think can come to my daughters - or to any of us for that matter, from playing or listening to the melodies that fill our hearts with beauty and joy of a pure sort.

Jared - (Solemnly) I have heard tell of no joy of that sort, William, and as to beauty - that's for women folk to gam about. And as to what harm can come - well, I'll tell thee, - it has been reported by Friend Clakson that among its other ill effects music has been known to produce hysteria and to weaken females for motherhood.

William * (With a twinkle in his eye)

That might happen in darkest Africa, Jared - but thee can be assured no such savage music as that will ever be played on our Nantucket! - Thee can come any evening and hear for thyself the pleasant and harmless tunes and happy voices of the young folk who gather around Anne's piano and it will do thy heart good. ^{Break} We have enough dissention in our Society- with our Meeting divided between the Gurneyites and the Wilburites - We must keep our hearts and minds open more than ever for the Truth to enter in. I have tried to ^{do so} and have had guidance in this matter.
(Impressed but still uncertain)

Jared - Thee is certain, William, thee is not veering to windward and heading thy craft for the Gurneyites?

William - No,- No, Jared, I am loyal to our Meeting and to John Wilbur, thee knows that. (Pause) Thee knows too, Jared, that I hold the property of our Monthly Meeting. Would it not seem very improper, and perhaps weaken our influence with the World's People here on our Island, if it should be found out that the accredited agent of the Society of Friends had been taken under dealings?

Jared - (Slightly taken aback)

Well - now there! - Hadn't taken ^Rperceivance of that!
No, none of the Elders have taken perceivance of that!-
(Shaking his head) Thee beats the pattern, William!

William * No, I'm not clever, Jared - but ~~is~~ it not true that if thee holds to thy course thee is likely to outride a headwind?

Jared - Well, William, I'll tell ye - -- 'tis likely we had best say no more about this matter. As thee says, the times are changing - but thee has not changed, William - no - thee was never a hand to steer an argument to thy way of thinking and then make a man ease-off. Well - (rising) I'll tell the Elders thee does not own the piano and thee never plays it - and well, we'll say no more about it.

William - (Smiling to himself)

Will thee not set a spell longer, Jared and smoke a pipe with me?

Jared - No thank'ee. I clipped in on my way home - but if I don't set sail now I'll be late and Hannah'll be whittling. (Starts across to door Left-Rear) William - I saw Maria going into that meeting place of those Unitarians on First Day!

William- Maria's of age, you know, Jared, and has a mind of her own. She feels she must find out for herself what truths there are in other beliefs before she sets her course.

Jared - (Shaking his head)

'Tis mighty! 'Tis mighty! - Thee and she will regret all thy-star-gazing someday! Come a day when thee will see too far - and learn more than thee was meant to know. Fare-well to thee.

(He goes off)

William -(In Hall)

Mind the steps, Jared - Fare-thee-well.

(The door closes)

(William comes back across the room, half smiling-humming a little tune to himself . He sits at his desk and starts again

at his figuring)

(Lydia appears from Right - and Maria from Left - almost simultaneously. They both look at William then at each other anxiously. Then Lydia ~~turns~~ comes forward, after a pause - to table and starts lighting the candles. Maria goes to window to close the shutters.)

Lydia - Will thee have thy tea now, William?

William-(Without looking up) Soon - soon.

Maria ~~turns~~ ^{from window U R} It looks to be a clear evening, Father. (Will thee join me in sweeping ^{the heavens} to-night?)

William (As before) Likely - 'tis likely.

Lydia -(Trying not to show her curiosity and anxiety)

Did thee find out from Jared if Hannah is still laid-up?

William -(Looking up) Now there - I never thought to'

We had much else to talk on. As thee presumed wife, Jared had come to deal with me about the piano.

Lydia - (Composedly) Yes - Well?

Maria ~~turns~~ -(More anxiously) Yes, - well Father? !

William (Chuckling looking at them both)

Yes, well - I think we can safely say, ^{at} on the matter, we are now "over the bulge".

(He chuckles again and turns to his writing-
they look at each other and smile)

CURTAIN

" MARIA MITCHELL "

ACT II

SCENE 2

"Maria Mitchell "

Act II
Scene IV. II

Setting - The Athenaeum (Interior of The Library - high desks
at center-back; Shelves of books painted on wings R. & L.)
Time - Two years later .

(When curtain rises Maria is seated behind large desk
at rear. She is busily writing . Books are about her
on the desk .)

(Children's voices are heard from behind book-racks
at the Right. - " Stop Debbie " , stop thy whittling! "
" But thee looks so funny " ! -)

(They both giggle)

Maria - (You children have the whole Island where you may
giggle. This library is for more serious matters .

Debbie - (Running to Maria's desk)
Friend Maria, I want a book please ; but I want a
funny book.

Patience - (Following Debbie more sedately)
And has thee not a romantic book for me? Like Cinderalla?

Maria - ^{You are} Thee is too old for Cinderalla now , Patience. At
your age I was reading Bowditch and Fergason's
Astronomy .

Debbie - What is that , please ?

Maria - The study of the stars .

Debbie - The stars are pretty, (when you can see them) . I
tried to count them once .

Patience - I saw the moon come up last night, over the ocean ,
at 'Sconset .

Debbie - Friend Maria , has thee found any more comets ?

Maria - No, Debbie, no more comets .

Debbie - I found a big star-fish on the beach last summer .

Maria - How nice. - The new St. Nicholas Magazine has just arrived. Now ~~if~~ ^{if} you will be very quiet you may take it over to the reading table and look at the pictures.

Debbie - Thank thee , Friend Mitchell .

Maria - And Patience , here is a book for you . You best look it over first before you decide to take it out.

Patience - Is it romantic, Friend Maria ?

Maria - Romantic and instructive . Now run along , but, remember to be quiet .

Patience - Wait - Debbie -
(Maria goes back to her figuring as the children run off , Right)

Hannah - (Off stage , Right , in loud tone)

Deborah , thee best not be so ^{wadgetty.} ~~wadgetty~~ . I shall report thee to the Overseer at Meeting if thee cannot sit up straight in a public place and put thy feet on the floor where they belong)

(Hannah enters from Right, wearing a bonnet and shawl and carrying a basket . She is followed by Deborah who pulls at her skirts and whispers to her)

Debbie-- Friend Maria'll report thee if thee talks out loud in here.

(She runs back)

Hannah - (Calling after her).

Deborah Swain, I shall see that thy mother knows of thybrudeness.

Maria - But she is right, Friend Hussey; those are the rules.

Hannah - Indeed Maria, Thee has a handsome new building here to sit in all afternoon long. But no wonder it has not many folk in it if one cannot talk and make themselves heard.

Maria - But this is a place for studying and reading.

Hannah - To be sure; I do want a book: that's why I came, to be sure!

Maria - May I help you find ^{your} ~~thy~~ book, Friend Hussey?

Hannah * Yes, yes--but just let me set a spell.

(She pulls up a chair by Maria's desk)

I have been whick-whacking back and forth on the square all afternoon doing errands.

Maria - What kind of a book would you like?

Hannah- (Vaguely)

Any of thy books will do. But first let me tell thee-- it's about Eunice--it's settled. I thought it never would be---but the spirit moved her at last, and she's to stand up in meeting next First Day. She's making a new white silk dress, and she's to have a new white bonnet. That's why I've been trottling all day. Yes, she's found her mate-- and she's to have a home of her own on Orange Street. Now, does thee not think that very pleasant news, Maria?

Maria - (Concealing her feelings)

It is indeed, Friend Hussey; and I feel certain she and John Bolton will lead a happy life together.

Hannah - Oh, it is not John Bolton ~~she's to stand up in~~
~~Meeting with~~ Oh my no! It is Ebenezer Stuart, the

rich merchant from Off--who has come to live On.

Maria -- (Looks up, surprised).

Not John? But they ~~have~~ been going out together for two years now.

Hannah - Yes, well, I presume likely he couldn't make up his mind. It took him four years to make up his mind about ~~you~~ ^{thee}, remember. But then maybe you didn't want him anyway. And Eunice is far better off; she'll have a fair wind all the way now. I knew thee'd be pleased.

Maria -- Yes, of course.

Hannah - Now with Phebe and Anne both married, thee is.....

Maria -- (Breaking in)

&&,,,,, the only one left. (Lightly) Do not fret about me, Friend Hussey; I have no time for marrying now; I will never have done, all the work I have set for my self: the days aren't long enough.

Hannah - Thee is right, no doubt, to keep thyself busy; and thee is lucky thee can. If a woman is to steer her own course she can't do much veering and hauling with safety. Well there---I do feel some petered--but I best back up Main Street. I have to purchase two yards of Valencia for Eunice before I start for home.

(Hannah has risen. She leans over desk to whisper)

No one seems to know how John took the news, but I saw him on the square today, and he looked as though he'd been struck with the dry wilt. And I heard tell that he is to leave the island soon--not to return.

(Fixing her shawl)

Well, he must listen and be guided. Thee must too, child; thee has always been a good girl at heart, and though thee has become known everywhere for thy star-gazing, they may change thy mind about marrying some day.

Maria - The book thee came for?

Hannah - (She has been looking off left) She leans over desk and whispers to Maria).

There he is now! There's John Bolton! I'll go around this way ~~(through the book racks)~~ so he won't see me. He might not want to on account of Eunice, you know. He might not know what to say.

(She scurries out right).

Maria - (Maria bends over her desk, writing).

John - (Speaking as he comes slowly from left)
Good afternoon to thee, Friend Maria.

Maria - (Looking up)

Good afternoon, John Bolton. How are you?

John - I be well, thank thee. How does thee?

Maria - Much as usual. I've been wretchedly busy of late, but have got into quiet waters again.

John - Thee always did keep thyself too busy.

Maria - People have to learn for themselves not only how much the head can bear but how much the heart can bear--as well as the body. I am learning more and more every day how little my head seems to be able to bear in comparison to what I should like it to.

John - And thy heart, Maria--thee closes thy heart---thee
may never know how much thy heart can bear.

Maria - (Looking down--takes up her pencil)

John, this is a public building: no fit place for
the discussion of such matters. Mine was but a pas-
sing remark, thoughtlessly made, I admit; but I had
forgotten the subject of my heart could be of any
interest to you.

John - (Looking at her intently, almost passionately)

Thee has such good eyes, Maria.

(Maria looks away)

If thee had not closed thy heart to me things might
have been different now.

Maria - If that were so it would seem to have had but little
effect on thee. It would seem that other hearts are
open. So let us leave it at that. I hear you are
contemplating closing your school, and leaving the
island. 'Tis a pity, I would think. You have done
well here.

John - I have been moved to seek larger fields. I must
follow my guidance. And now what will thee do?

Maria - (Gives him a look, and then speaks quizzically)

Nicely, thank you--nicely.

John - (Looks at her; then looks away)

I didn't mean.....

Maria - (As before)

No.....?

John - No, my meaning was---now that thee has become famous,
and have been awarded a medal, and have had other

honors bestowed upon thee, will thee remain here giving out books in a library on this small island?

Maria — I see no reason why not. Besides, this fame you speak of is a misnomer. The world of science acknowledges new truths as they are discovered; the world at large pays a fleeting tribute; and then the whole matter is forgotten, and rightly. For what has fame to do with science? It adds not one atom to the stature of the seeker in the realm of truth. Besides, I have not yet accomplished enough to deserve any fame. And as for the medal: as yet I have not even received it.

John — But it has been awarded to thee---. And I understood thy father to say thee's had word it had arrived in Boston.

Maria — I believe it has. It will be nice to have, I presume likely. But what does one do with a medal? I can't hang it about my neck.

John — (Smiling) No, not precisely. But if it were not for the medal thee might not have been the first woman to have been made a Fellow of the Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Maria — Not a "Fellow", remember. Did you not know that old Asa Gray, the secretary of the organization, erased the word "Fellow", and substituted "Honorary Member", though he had no right to at all. Even he could not accept the fact that a woman should be put on equal footing with men.

John - But thee is a member all the same; thee must at least allow thyself some satisfaction in that.

Maria - ^{Have you} ~~Has thee~~ not come about in ^{your} ~~thy~~ thinking, John? I seem to remember thee ^{you} advised there could be no satisfaction in this life for a woman if she did not continually practice the homely virtues of cooking and sewing.

John - (Confused)

But Maria---I only meant.....

(He sees William Mitchell coming from the right)

Thy father comes.... (To William) Good day to thee, Friend Mitchell.

William- (Coming into view)

Good day to thee, John.

John - If I may have this book, Friend Maria, I will take it with me.

(She takes the book, and marks it)

Maria - ~~(Handing him the book)~~

Farewell, John.

John - (With an almost pleading look)

Fare-thee-well, Maria.

(Their looks hold a second; then John goes quickly out left)

William- (He has been watching John off)

I would think the young man is paying the price for his wavering----if it be any satisfaction to thee.

Maria - ~~(She looks up at him quickly, and then looks down)~~

I feel no satisfaction if his wavering ~~if~~ has brought him pain, but I doubt it will last.

William - I should judge his wavering was brought about because he had no precedent. He found a woman who had a brain, and could use it: that was new.

Maria - (Amused)

If the earth had waited for precedent it never would have turned on its axis! But sit thee down, father. I have this column of figures to finish before closing time.

William- (Looking at her fondly)

But daughter, I have something for thee--something special.

Maria - (After a pause, looks up)

For me?

William- (Holding out small parcel, tied and sealed)

Yes, something that has been on its way for nearly two years. It came with thy mail to-day.

(He hands her the parcel) and some letters)

Thy medal, child.

Maria - (Surprised, and pleased in spite of herself)

The medal--so it finally arrived!

Will (She opens parcel)

William- If had not been for the quick action of Edward

Everett I doubt it ever should have. ~~XXXXX~~

He has sent me

~~XXXXXX~~ the correspondence that went back and forth

between him and the officials of the Court of ~~XXX~~

~~King~~ of Denmark to establish thy claim, ~~XXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~ ~~XXXXXX~~

Maria - Well--there it is, father. But is that well built

female in the Grecian robes supposed to REPRESENT me ?

W1

Maria

[illegible]

1111am

Maria

William

Maria -

William

I like the feel of it ,yes, - and I am very happy for thee .

Maria

(Tenderly)

But, father, it is thy medal as well as mine. Did thee not teach me all I know? - Hasn't thee always been my help and guide? Isn't our knowledge of the heavens shared as one?!

William

(Patting her hand)

But this is of thine own doing - this is all thine. Thee has worked hard - thee has accomplished much and thee deserves recognition.

(He puts medal back in case)

Maria

" The best that can be said for my life so far is that it has been industrious, and the best that can be said of me is that I have not pretended to what I was not ".

William

But thee has so much ahead of thee, Maria, and if this opportunity comes, to pass on thy knowledge to generations of young women, thy future will be full and varied .

Maria

All my efforts will seem justified then ! Now, if only it does; for On looking back I seem to feel there is so much that has been left out of my life - the days have been

crowded, and yet - so little to show for them.

William

But daughter I have heard thee say " why look back at all ? Why turn your eyes to your shadow, when by looking upward, you see your rainbow in the same direction. "

Maria

I know and I'll try not to forget that, father, - if ~~there~~ will always remember the medal is as much thine as mine. - And let us keep this odd-looking symbol - of what real value I know not -

- to ourselves. We won't tell anyone about it, but those at home.
I'd prefer it that way.

William

As thee wishes ,daughter.

Maria

And father, if I have so much ahead of me, ^{so} much to accomplish,
~~one may say another has~~ thee has as much, thyself.

William

~~ixhavexenough~~ There will be enough "to last the voyage", Maria .

Maria

(Looking at him lovingly and sadly)
Don't let's think of voyages ending , but beginning - .

(Holding up letter)
This would be a new voyage, indeed ! And an exciting one .

~~And father, thee knows, that, even if I am not chosen to be
part of this magnificent enterprise I have already resolved
to give more and more future effort to the intellectual
advancement of women.~~

(Deborah runs in from Right)

Deborah

Can I have more picture books to look at, Friend Maria ? May I, please ?

(Patience follows Deborah , from Right)

Patience- (Running in)

And please may I have another book ~~(more like~~

~~Cinderella~~. This is all about big people.

Maria — And some day ^{you} thee will be a big person ^{your} thyself,

Patience; so 'tis well you learn more about ~~the~~
~~different kinds of~~ grown-up people, ~~there are in the~~
~~world~~. These "Tales From Shakespeare" were written
by Mr. Lamb for little girls like you.

Debbie - (Picking up box with medal, wide-eyed with interest)
Friend Maria, what is this thee has here? May I see it?

Patience- For shame, Debbie! Thee must not touch---!

(Unable to keep from looking)

Oh---, it's pretty and shiny! I never saw anything
like it! What is it for?

William- It is a medal, Patience.

Debbie - I know! It's Friend Maria's medal. It's come!

My mother said maybe it never would.

(Starts out hurriedly)

I ~~will~~ go tell her it's here, and I saw it before
anyone else!

Patience- (Following her out--off left)

~~She~~ ^{thee} did not, Deborah Swain! I did! I'm going to tell
Aunt Hepzibeth, and she'll tell everyone that I saw
it first! (Their voices fade out behind the book racks)

Maria — (Smiling ruefully)

There's no stopping the news now.

William- (Chuckling) If I misstay not, Maria, thee'll have to
share thy glory with the island after all.

CURTAIN-

"MARIA MITCHELL"

ACT III

Scene 1 - The Dome Room in the Observatory at Vassar College-
About fifteen years later.

When curtain rises, Maria is sitting at telescope, sweeping the heavens and dictating her observations to Emily, who sits beside her taking notes in a copybook. Fanny is sitting at small table, at R. of C., laboring over some computations, but her ~~gaze~~ gaze wanders and she starts to draw picture on her paper.

Maria has aged, her curls are gray, and she wears a black dress, with small white collar and cameo at her throat. Emily a college girl of about 17, wears a plain dark dress of the period, and Fanny, a year younger, wears a somewhat fancier dress; both have on black sateen aprons.

(Maria moves away from telescope, takes copy book from Emily and checks over the figures. Then she crosses ~~in~~ impressively to Fanny who rises as Maria comes to table.)

Maria ~~—~~ Here are the corrections of your calculations Miss Tilsbury.

I hope

I hope you have already found your mistakes. (She glances quickly at paper on table) What's this? Pictures -?
Instead of columns of figures?

Fanny - (Guiltily) I just drew those while I was thinking - sort of —

Maria ~~—~~ There can be no such wandering of the mind during the study of astronomy. If you wish to continue the study of the heavenly bodies you will have to show ^{more} concentration and less carelessness. So far "thee isn't good enough to take in slack!"

Fanny - Slack - Professor Mitchell -?

Maria ~~—~~ A sea term. I forgot you were an inlander. No matter!

But, to have calculated Saturn so far off its course that it would run into its own moons, does matter! Such calamity would set ~~all~~ the ~~constellations and~~ planets wavering in their orbits, colliding with each other, until the whole ^{solar system} ~~universe~~ would be in chaos.

Emily - Dear me - what a catastrophe!

Maria - (Continuing to Fanny)

You mistook this star at the right of Saturn ^{of moons} for one of the moons.

Fanny - (Pouting) But I thought all the visible stars ^{near} ~~within~~ the ~~vicinity~~ of Saturn were supposed to be moons?

Maria - (Iratly) Supposed -? Nothing is supposed in science, Miss Pillsbury! You can take nothing for granted.

Fanny - (Still sulky) - But Professor -

Maria - (Going right on) You must question every step of the way.

"We cannot accept anything as granted beyond the first mathematical formulae! Question everything else!" I cannot repeat this too often! That is the basis of a scientific ~~XXXXX~~ approach.

Fanny - (Stiffling a sob) I'll never become a scientist!

Maria - I took you in this freshman class because of your parents' wish, and because you showed an aptitude for mathematics, but you will have to decide before your next class whether or not you are interested enough in the subject to make the effort for accuracy that it demands.

(Fanny turns away ready to burst into tears)

Maria - (Turning to Emily) And Miss Stoddard, in your calculations of Vega earlier in the evening, you ignored ~~one~~ ^{one} hundredth of a second at its culmination!

Emily - (Chagrined at her mistake) Did I, Professor Mitchell! How dreadful!

Maria — Not dreadful precisely, but "while you are doing it, you might as well do it to a nicety".

Fanny - I don't see why mother and father want me to study astronomy anyway? I'll never want to be an astronomical observer! Will you Emily?

Maria — It is not so likely that either of you will become scientists as that you will cook and sew, but "the utility of a study is not it's entire claim to value" no, - "I do not expect to make of you astronomers and mathematicians, but I hope to open your eyes and your understanding to the wonderful lessons of the universe. We shall grow larger if we accustom ourselves to contemplate great objects - we shall broaden with the effort to grasp great truths, even if we fail to envision them."

(Both girls are interested but a little bewildered)

Emily - (Enthusiastically) Oh yes!

Maria — We can all -

(William Mitchell's voice comes from below as he mounts the stairs and appears from below)

Will. - Maria, a note has come for thee - from Dr. Raymond.

(He hands note to Maria and turns to others)

Good evening, young ladies, I hope the sweeping of the heavens has been profitable this evening?

Fanny - Good evening, sir Mr. Mitchell.

(Fanny sits at table looking over her papers)

Emily - Good evening, sir. We have done some observing, and made some calculations, though they were not akk satisfactory.

Maria — (Folding her note quickly - looking slightly perturbed, turns to Emily)
Satisfactory is hardly the word, Miss Stoddard. - ! calcu-

lations are either correct or incorrect, there is no one to satisfy, except the Truth! I must go at once - Dr. Raymond wishes to confer with me in his office. My shawl - where is it? - I had it here, I know!

(Emily finds it under the chair) *Here it is!*

Continue with your observing, young ladies. I'll not be long father.

(Emily has come to her to put the shawl around her shoulders, as she does so she plucks a white thread off Maria's black skirt)

Maria - (Abruptly) - Please put that thread back where it came from

Miss Stoddard -!

(Emily does so carefully and places shawl carefully about Maria's shoulders. Maria starts to stairs)

And, "if my shawl drags, I want it to!"

(She descends quickly - while after an embarrassed silence William and Emily exchange an understanding smile)

Will. - If my daughter never had to think about the clothes she has ~~to~~ wear, she would be much relieved. -

(moving over to table)

Now tell me, what seems to be wrong with thy calculations?

Fanny - Professor Mitchell says I mistook a star near Saturn's rings, for one of it's moon's.

Will. - Well, I presume likely, if Maria says you did, it is so, as accuracy has been one of her attributes ever since she was a child. It seems to come to her naturally - No doubt that is the reason for her impatience with other's inaccuracies. But let me ~~have a look~~ *use the telescope*

(He takes Fanny's paper, glances at it and then goes to telescope)

Will - (As he looks through glass) There is a star very near the rings of the moons - that might easily be confused by a novice - especially as the heavens are ~~done to~~ clear - Come see for thyself, if thee can detect the difference now before the clouds intervene. (He gives way to Fanny)

Fanny - (Taking seat at telescope) Thank you sir.

(William turns to Emily)

Emily - (At her figures) Professor Mitchell was right - I did make a mistake - My - wouldn't my father be delighted to know I had been brought to task because I ignored one one/
~~xxxxxxxx~~ hundredth of a second in an astronomical calculation.

Will. - I remember Maria, making many such mistakes, at the age of 12, when she first started to do my calculations.

Emily - But Mr. Mitchell, I am sixteen -

Will. - But thee did not grow up with a telescope on thy roof.

Emily - No, but my father is a stickler for correctness. - He told me he had decided to send me to Mr. Vassar's Experiment for for the Higher Education of Women, when he found out Professor Mitchell would be teaching here, so I could learn to use accurately, the brain he hopes I have inherited from him. He says he has suffered too long with my mother's inaccurate brain, to be able to put up with another such in the family!

Fanny - (Coming away from telescope) Mother thinks it isn't fashionable for a young lady to know too much, and that I'll never catch a husband, now that I'm to become a blue-stockings!

Will. - And how does thee feel about the matter? Does thee not think a man will be glad to have the woman he chooses have knowledge of many subjects that she can pass on to her children. -

Fanny - I hadn't thought of it that way. --

Will. - (Amused) - Did thee separate the stars from the small moon's this time, Friend Tillsbury?

Fanny - Yes, I saw the star about ~~one-tenth of the diameter of the field~~ away from Saturn and I suppose that ~~one-tenth of the diameter of the field on the glass~~ makes a difference. -

Will. - That ~~one-tenth of the diameter of the field on the glass~~ means two hundred thousand miles apart, you see, it does make a difference, and you can not realize why your Professor was perturbed. Maria and I have come to feel that "a mathematical formula is a hymn of the universe" therefore, if the hymn is out of tune it grates on our senses as does a tune when it goes awry. You'll soon feel that way yourself. Why, I remember once, in Nantucket, after I had made some corrections in Maria's calculations, she went walking over the moors and got so brooding over her mistake, she became lost, in one of our Island fogs, and finally arrived home with torn dress and scratched ankles and a very contrite heart. ~~she declared the next day she would never again waste her time feeling sorry for herself, but would correct her mistakes, at once and hope not to make them again. - That's the only way thee can learn not to make any, yourng ladies.~~

Fanny - (Impressed) Yes, I suppose so.

Emily - Mr. Mitchell, tell us more about Nantucket - that far-away Island

Will. - Thee says correctly - Friend Stoddard - far-away Island,
is the translation of the Indian word Nantucket.

Fanny - We have a lot of Indians on the reservation near us, in
Minnesota.

Emily - I've seen Indians in the Northern part of this state,
at Onongawa, but how did they get so far out to sea as
Nantucket, with only canoes?

Will. - Well thee may ask, Friend. What happened was the tribes
on Martha's Vineyard found there were shoals and
several small islands between them and Nantucket so
they used them as stepping stones, as thee might say -
But this is not continuing with observations, as your
Professor expects, I fear I am keeping thee ^{you} from the
telescope and will be reprimanded, as well as thee ^{you}
(This last he says with a twinkle in his eye, the girls
smile back at him)

Fanny - But Mr. Mitchell, please go on -

Emily - No, Mr. Mitchell is right, we must prove to Professor
Mitchell that we're not dullards - (giving her note-
book) Here, you take down the notations, while I do
the sweeping - as Professor Mitchell would say!

(They take their places, and while Emily is
obviously having trouble focusing on a star - Will.
crosses to table and sits looking over papers)

Fanny - Well - can't ^{you} ~~thee~~ find anything?

Emily - (Moving telescope about) -No - not yet - the clouds
are - yes! - no - I -?

Fanny - (Impatiently) Well - really - let me have a look -?

(At the same time Maria's voice is heard from below)

Maria - (Calling) -Are all of you still in the Dome-room?

(She is now mounting the stairs)

Fanny - Yes, Professor, we are still observing.

Maria - But you can see nothing! - Quite obviously heavy clouds have settled across the heavens for the remainder of the night.

Emily - (Looking away from telescope) I was trying to make sure we could sight no more stars, Professor.

Maria - I would be encouraged to find such industry at a time when it is more warranted. - You may relinquish your tasks for this evening and return to your dormitory, and as it is past the hour for lights-out you'd as well flax. I have more than once been brought to task by the Lady Principal because my girls remain at the telescope beyond the prescribed bed-hour, but how else one can ~~learn to~~ observe the night sky has not been indicated. -Also it has been found that some of my freshman in the past have used the telescope as an excuse for late hours, when they were off making fudge in Seniors, rooms and the like. That, I do not tolerate! You may let it be known that any girl who hides behind the study of astronomy for such antics - will be asked to resign from my classes. } -Now, Miss Tilsbury - mount the ^{at stool} stairs and put on the hood!

(Fanny looks bewildered and Emily points to a red velvet hood-like casing that hangs over the back of chair, by telescope, Fanny mounts the steps and putting hood on her own head faces front. -Maria and Emily take one look and then burst into laughter - William looks up and sees what has happened and joins the laughter)

Maria - That beats the pattern! A hood in an observatory is for the head of the telescope, not for the head of the observer. But I apologize for not making myself clear. - (Turning abruptly to Emily) And I wish to apologize, to you, Miss Stoddard.

Emily - What for, Professor Mitchell.

Maria ~~---~~ (Smiling) For my abruptness concerning a certain thread before I left the room. You see, I thought you may be like so many of my seniors who torment me by looking after me, when all I want is to be let alone.

Emily - (Smiling to herself) I'll try to remember, Professor, not to look after you! -

Maria ~~---~~ Now scud along - both of you! - And don't drift astern, either one.

(Emily picks up her cloak, and meanwhile Fanny has placed hood on telescope and come down the ladder from telescope-top and picked up her wrap - They start down the stairs below)

Emily - Good night Professor. - Good night Mr. Mitchell.
Fanny

Will. - Good night, young ladies. -

(As they disappear William turns to table and starts to straighten papers - Maria, preoccupied, shawl still dragging, walks back and forth with arms folded in front of her)

Maria ~~---~~ (After a pause) - Well - when I received President Raymond's note, requesting my presence for a consultation, I felt sure he had some real grievance to propound. My mind ran to every conceivable cause for perturbation, - my marking system, the late hours my students must keep - even to the point of ~~deciding~~ ^{thinking} the Trustees had decided the study of Science was not necessary for the higher education of women and that I was being dismissed! - (And turning to her father) ^{and} And for what, d you imagine, I was brought to task? With deference and reluctance, he wished to bring to my attention the fact that there had been complaints from the Lady Principal because I had mended my stockings so near the front window on Sundays???!!!

Will. - (Amused) I hope thee contained thyself - Maria. -?

Maria. — I told Dr. Raymond I had already examined my conscience carefully on that subject, and did not find mending on Sunday a misdemeanor in myself, as I had no other time to attend to such necessary matters, therefore I was at a loss to understand any objection to placing my chair where it gave the best light. Also he told me, some of the trustees are disturbed by my knitting on Sundays.

Will. — Even thy mother found no harm in that.

Maria. — I said ~~he~~ ^{she} could tell them I was knitting stockings for my father, — that thee could wear no other kind of stockings, and that if I were not to neglect my students I would be obliged to continue to knit on Sundays! Another case of contemplating "the infinitesimal and forgetting the infinite"! —

Will. — As thee already knows that to be a human deficiency, it should not arouse thee to such an extent. ~~And that such narrowness seems shocking to us is not surprising. When one has not had the opportunity to contemplate the Universal heavens at close range as we have, it is not easy to be liberal minded.~~

Maria. — The next thing he requested was that I attend church every Sunday in my prescribed pew. I told him "I cannot ^{rise} pray to order" ! — And that the last time I attended church "I felt sad to know that not a listener would lead a better life for the sermon, ~~no woman or man went out cheered or comforted or stimulated!~~" Then he referred to the remarks of ~~Nathan Bishop~~ ^{our} that Trustees of the college ~~who is~~ leader of the Evangelical Alliance, who has declared he was "sure I was a Frank Theodore Parker Unitarian" and believed I had kept away from Vassar five times as many

students as my influence had brought to it!" -

Will. - But Friend Raymond knows well enough that Friend Vassar founded the college on a non-sectarian basis.

Maria - Yes, but he cannot fathom "a belief in nature, revealed by science, that gives us only one creed - There is a God and he is good". - How often have I been called/ infidel-
Thee knows that!

Will. - But also I know that thee realizes in thy heart that "every scientist seeks only the truth - and the study of truth can do no harm.

Maria - ^{out} Oh father, I am weary of this continual wrangling. I want only a quiet place, again, to study my own observations and those of others. - We should never have ^{quick} left Nantucket. And - (After a pause) It is likely, now, that we shall be returning -!

Will. - How may that be, Maria?

Maria - Well, I confess - I was so perturbed by Dr. Raymond's complaints that I came right out with what I had been contemplating for some time. - I countered, ~~in fact~~ with my dissatisfaction with arrangements here. -

Will. - Did thee, indeed!

Maria - I told him the way the women on the faculty were neglected was a scandal. I reminded him that each time the list of committees is issued the women's names are left out, ~~that when he requested from the faculty, an accounting of their publications he forgot us completely.~~ "We may not have done so much as the men, but we have both ~~had articles published.~~ Finally - I told him that neither Dr. ^{Alida} Avery nor I could fathom why all our correspondence on the subject of equal salary with the men had been ignored and that we could put up with this injustice no

longer and had determined to give in our resignation at the end of the semester. "I assured him the plan was matured and was not mere talk."

Will. - Well, well.

Maria - ~~It is the case, father.~~ - I had not wanted to muckle thee until the matter had come to a head. - Thee knows it is not a matter of the money - it is that this unequal treatment with men will effect the future of women everywhere.

Will. - Thee has done right, Maria, to take a stand. But I would not like to see thee give up this work that thee is well suited to, and which has given thee a great deal of satisfaction in the past. And -

Maria - And I know father, we have been comfortable here - and thee enjoys the companionship of the congenial professors and the zest for learning of so many youthful minds, that ~~xxx~~ have come to love and honor thee - and I would not wish to be the cause of another break in thy life - But - the eyes of the whole country are on this experiment of ~~higher education for women~~, and if the women Professors who have had the same training as men, ~~in the only college for women~~, do not rate equal pay with the men, then women will never gain equal recognition in the educational field. And I have come to believe in women even more than I do in astronomy!"

CURTAIN

the advancement

"MARIA MITCHELL"

Act III

SCENE 2 The Dome Room, on Graduation Day - four years later.

When curtain rises Maria - is coming up the stairs she had a strained, tired expression and conveys the idea that she is trying to escape from the confusion and excitement of Graduation Day. - Dressed in a handsome black dress, with a cap-like piece of black lace over her gray curls, she looks handsome. She listens first off *L.*, to voices and laughter of the young girls in the distance then, after putting her hand on her telescope and looking at it fondly, she crosses *R.* and listens to girls singing down below. Their voices trail off and she crosses again to telescope, mounts the stairs and removes the hood - and after placing it on the chair, is about to focus the glass, when voices come from below.

Emily - Professor! - Professor Mitchell?

Fanny - (Calling) May we come up?

Maria - (Calling) Come girls - whoever you are - (come up! (As they appear she smiles) *to center* Oh, Emily and Fanny - of course - (it's good to have a visit by ourselves on this busy day.) -

Emily - (Solemnly) Yes, we wanted to see you - to say - (She hesitates)

Fanny - But hasn't it been a wonderful day! The Daisy-chain - the speeches - all the people! I've had fun every minute!

Maria - (That 's right Fanny - get all you can out of the excitement! For me - these graduation days are always too tiring to be entertaining, especially as I can't help feeling so much of the pageantry, the show, is unnecessary. -)

Emily - I suppose it's only exciting for us graduates. But the most fun, we all agree, was the Dome Party last week, with ~~xxx~~ cakes made like the stars and moons! ~~The cake~~ and the verses! *you wrote for us.*

Fanny - Oh Professor Mitchell - we'll never forget that evening!

Maria - (I suppose it isn't proper, but I had such a good time myself having ~~and~~ my girls here in the Dome, for one last party - that's all the Graduation Exercises I care about!)

Fanny - But so many people ask to meet you, Professor Mitchell, you're just about the most important person here!

Maria - (Touched) Not ~~that~~, child.

Emily - Well we think so, anyway! And everyone flocks around you and makes such a fuss over you!

Maria - That's the reason I fled to the Dome Room!

Emily - And that's why we came here, because we haven't had a chance to see you all day, and, well we - (Emily shows her reluctance to mention good-bye)

Maria - (Sensing her diffidence, etc.) But I've seen you a great deal, I've noted how nicely you marched with the Daisy-cabin, and how trim and graceful you looked in your pretty fresh white frocks. -)

Emily - We thought you looked very handsome on the stand with the faculty -

Maria - (Laughingly) (This is getting to be a "mutal admiration society"! ~~But you can't mesmerize me with your flattery!~~ You see, I've known, for a long time, just what I look like! Did I never tell you of the conversation I overheard on the Nantucket boat? On a rough crossing I had rolled myself up in a rug ^{when I} on a lounge and was presumably asleep when one of my neighbors from Nantucket said to another - "I suppose Maria Mitchell has done some pretty good things, - people say so -, but she's awful homely!"

(They all laugh - the girls only half heartedly)

Fanny - That's not true, Professor Mitchell -!

Maria ~~---~~ You don't think so, perhaps, Fanny, because in spite of all the scoldings for mistaken calculations, etc., we admire each other, isn't that it?

Emily - We all admire you Miss Mitchell, more than we can express - that's what we want to try to tell you, now that we've come, to say good-bye -

Fanny - Yes, Miss Mitchell - we want to thank you for all the scoldings! You've made the whole world seem different for me.

(Irate voice of woman, comes from below)

Mrs. Cant - (From Below) Professor Mitchell? Professor, where are you?

Maria ~~---~~ (Going to opening) Here I am, - what is it?

Mrs. Cant. - (As she mounts the stairs, huffing and puffing) Well, but these stairs are steep! - Professor Mitchell!

Maria ~~---~~ Yes .

Mrs. Cantwell - Well - well - think of that! What a time I've had finding you! Looked all over the grounds, went to the main office - tried all the class-rooms - and here you are, up in your sky-house - peeking at the stars, think of that! And these young ladies - sweet girls/ graduates I suppose? Imagine girls graduating from a college just like boys! It's like a miracle! No such thing in our day, eh, Professor? Now I am -

Maria ~~---~~ (Finally getting a chance to speak, in frigid tones) Yes, whom have I the honor to receive?

Mrs. Cantwell - Why, I am Mrs. Penelope Cantwell - you know - head of the Parade Committee of the Woman Suffrage Movement - and we want you to march with us next month - think of

that!

May I sit down? (She sits, chair L.)

(During the next speech Maria sits, near telescope and girls stand or sit near table R. Mrs. C. goes right on talking)

It's the first parade ever held by women! Yes, and we want every woman whose made a name for herself in America, and you are famous, Professor - oh don't deny it - you found a comet didn't you - well - We'll have banners - stretched across, carried by other marchers - reading "Comet Finder Demands Vote"! - "Star Gazer Foresees Equal Rights For Women"! Think of that !

(The girls look at one another and can hardly contain their amusement)

Maria --- I am not an astrologer, Mrs. Cantwell/and there will be no such banners -

Mrs. C. - But--

Maria --- (Going right on) Nor will I march in any parade.

Mrs. C. - (Abashed) But, Professor Mitchell, I thought as President of the Association for the Advancement of Women that you - that you --

Maria --- Yes, I am Head of that Association, and I do advocate votes for women - in fact I have so long believed in women's right to a share in the government that it is like the first axiom I learned in geometry - a straight line is the shortest distance between two points - But I feel it should come about through education - not through the militant tactics used so frequently by the Suffragists.

Mrs. C. - (Crossly) Well, think of that! Well - it does seem to me that when ladies like Jennie June Croly the founder of the well known Sorosis club, and ~~Lucy Stone~~ and ~~Julia Ward Howe~~, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony are willing to parade that a lady Professor ought to be!

Maria ~~---~~ (Amused in spite of herself) You see, Mrs. Cantwell, it's this way - star-gazing, as you call it, requires the climbing of a good many stairs and my nether limbs have given out, so I can walk very little, much less parade.
(Maria winks at the girls who stifle their mirth)

Mrs. C. - (Solicitously) Now, think of that -! What a pity! - A real martyr to your studies ~~dear~~?! Now I know a good remedy for varicose veins that might help you! -

Maria ~~---~~ It's not the veins - it's the arteries! - But I still can manage to get about thank you! - Now Mrs. Cantwell, I will be glad to contribute to the expenses for your parade. (Taking money from the pocket of her dress) Here is ten dollars and if you have any list of names of women teachers to be carried in your parade you may add my name to it. - *She goes down stairs*

Mrs. C. - ~~xxxxxxxxxxxx~~ Well, now dear, that's help - yes it is, a real help, and I'll have the Committee write you a letter. Think of that! Now, how about these young ladies, have they made up their minds about Votes For Women! -?

Maria ~~---~~ They should have - they have graduated from a college that has attempted to teach them to think for themselves, so I will let them speak for themselves. - This is Miss Stoddard. *X back to chair*

Emily - How do you do, Mrs. Cantwell - This is Fanny Tilsbury.

Fanny - How-do-you-do.

Mrs. C. - Now young ladies you are too young yet to realize the abuses women have suffered from men. But you will learn! In the present distorted condition of society we women must be bound together to throw off the shackles which have been so insidiously forged about us! Why I shuddered when I read the other day in the speech of an editor of a widely read newspaper, where he said - "The first duty of

Margit

a woman is to be ornamental in the parlor"! (She grows more eloquent) Now if you don't want to be treated as a piece of bric-a-brac for the rest of your lives I warn you your only choice is to join the Women Suffrage movement and demand the franchise! - They do not take us seriously yet - but this great parade will show them we are in earnest. - We will all be dressed in white, like crusaders, and we will march down Fifth Avenue, thousands strong, to the music of many bands, and no mere man will be able to resist us - I mean our cause! Now think on that, young ladies!

Fanny - Oh I do believe in Woman Suffrage, and I do want to join the cause - but - I can't march in the parade because tomorrow I go back home with my family ~~in~~ ~~to~~ ~~the~~ ~~state~~ ~~of~~ ~~Minnesota~~ Minnesota.

Emily - Yes, -I think we women should be allowed to vote but I'm ~~leaving for~~ ~~have to go back to my home in~~ ~~Syracuse to-morrow also,~~ ^{early in the morning}
But if two dollars of my graduation money will help, I'd be glad to give it. -

Mrs. C. - Yes, that'll make you a member - (Brings cards from her bag)
Here's a card to fill out -

(Emily takes card and starts writing)

Fanny - I'd like to join too - here's my two dollars.

Mrs. C. - Think of that! two recruits! (She gives Fanny a card) Now You will be able to dedicate yourselves to the cause! Now that you are going out into the world you can wage war against the injustices to our sex, you can become heroines that all America will glorify! - Think of that! *use*

(The girls look sheepish and give her the cards)(oney)

Maria ~~—~~ (taking her by the arm and leading her to the steps) And now, Mrs. Cantwell - the stars are beginning to come out

and I must do some "gazing". Hope you have a fair wind and plain sailing for your parade. -

Mrs. C.- (At steps, as she starts to descend slightly bewildered)
Oh - but we're to have no ships - no! Everyone on foot!
Think of that! Good bye! -Good bye!

(She disappears - the girls start to giggle - Maria presses her fingers to her lips but there is a twinkle in her eyes)

Emily - (Looking at card) Oh, dear me, Fanny, do you realize what we have done?! We're members of the Women Suffrage Movement now - and -

Fanny - Great goodness - yes - and they may expect us to do dreadfully hard things for the Cause - like going to jail!

Maria - (Looking at card) I can't see that this makes you an active member, and after all, it is a Cause to which you adhere. It's only that some of the methods of those at the helm are not commendable. ~~(The members of the Assembly for the Advancement of Women believe when women have "proved themselves capable of work that involves the highest intellectual and social responsibilities" then will the ballot come automatically. But - you can't decide all this now.)~~ We've been interrupted in our good-byes, your families must be waiting for you at the Main Hall, and those handsome beaus. - Tell me, Fanny, dear girl is it serious between you and that tall, blond Minnesota boy?

Fanny - (Shyly) He says - he is, and -

Maria - I thought so.

Fanny - Oh, but Miss Mitchell. I will go on studying and I'll never forget the inspiration of your lessons, nor the way of life you've taught me. I've wanted to tell you

filling out the design of the whole &

[illegible]

~~xxxxxx~~. (Taking Emily's hand) (You'll write me

from time to time I know, and you'll be back to visit, and I'll still be here at least till my orbit curve's off into another sphere. -)

Emily - We wanted to say good-bye to Mr. Mitchell, too.

Fanny - (Getting ahold of herself) Yes, he's been so kind to us.

Maria ~~—~~ (Her face has clouded) ~~xxx~~ I'm afraid father can see no one. He hasn't left his room, not even today.

Fanny - Then he's feeling no better? - Oh I am sorry!

Emily - Yes, please tell him we hope -

(Weak voice of Mr. Mitchell from below)

Will. - Thee can tell me thyself, - I'm coming up

Maria ~~—~~ (Crossing quickly to opening) Oh no, father, thee mustn't climb the stairs!

Will. - (Coming to view slowly) Fiddlesticks! - Been climbing stairs all my life! (Maria helps him up to top of stairs)
Been watching the young lady graduates from my window and now I don't want to miss ~~anything~~ saying God speed to our special friends here.

Emily - Oh, Mr. Mitchell, I'm so glad to see you before we leave.
Fanny and I both go early to-morrow morning and - well -
we did want to see you again.

Fanny - We don't want to say good-bye, but we must, and we'd like to thank you for all you've done for us.

Will. - (Wearily) Done nothing at all. - It's thee and thy
young ideas that have kept me going so long. - And now you're
going forth - to spread those young ideas - Thee is well
equipped, both follow ^{your} guidance and ^{you are} thee'll lead
fine full lives I feel certain. - That's what counts, eh,
Maria?

Fanny - And now, I know what Professor Mitchell is going to say,
best scud along, girls or you'll be late!

Maria - ~~Thee~~ ^{There's} right, Fanny - and not say good-bye - just
safe voyage and a fair wind all the way -

(The girls shake hands with Mr. Mitchell and
hurry down the stairs, Maria and Will. watching
them - Then they turn, she helps her father to a
chair - then goes to Observatory window and waves to
girls - Their voices come from the distance -)

Emily - Farewell, Professor Mitchell!

Fanny - Good-bye!

(Singing of Bonnie Eloise, girls join in - Maria
stands watching them until their voices fade)

Will. - Pretty, that.

Maria - ~~Thee~~ always did like to hear young voices raised in song.

Will. - ~~But there was no~~ ^{There was ~~but~~ little} singing in our household till thee
brought the piano into the Great Hall, - remember?

Maria - ~~And~~ remember how old Jared Hussey and the Elders fumed
about that?!

Will. - We've come a long way - since those days, Maria -

Maria - ~~(Sitting on stool by her father)~~ Some times I think, yes,
but when I remember the distance there is to go, I wonder.
Bigotry is ^{still} so imbedded in the minds of so many - - -

Will. - There'll always be a hitch in every step of the way, But
much has been accomplished ^{here} at Vassar College, and thee has
done thy share. And thee ^{should be satisfied} ~~is not sorry, I know~~ that thee
reversed thy decision ^{to leave} ~~four years ago and stayed on.~~

Maria - ~~No.~~ ^{Yes} - And ~~it~~ is a comfort to contemplate that no longer
is a girl considered a freak if she goes to college.
Though slowly and grudgingly, my girls are being accepted in
the scienti//c fields ~~they still have to fight for it.~~ But
they're making ~~xxxxxx~~ their contribution as teachers,

as physicists - as biologists, as mathematicians, ~~yes~~

~~gradually they are proving women can xxxxxxxxxx com-~~

~~pote with men -~~

Will. - ~~And with honors that have been conferred on thee--~~ *And surely the honors that have been conferred on thee will*
~~Surely thee must realize what influence, such recognition of~~ *on the have an*
~~a woman's ability will have on future generations -~~ *in the*

Maria - ~~I~~ I hope so - for that is all the degrees are good for! My
fear is that women will let up in the fight, now that some
gain has been made and ride the tide, when there is still
a head wind to buffet.

Will. - But thee has always enjoyed a head-wind, Maria - ~~thee~~
~~knows that~~ - and thee has many years of strength ahead to
continue to buffet it. -

Maria - ~~And~~ *to him* And thee too, father, it will take the strength of heart
of both of us.

Will. - (After a short Pause) -No - Maria - no - I have sat in the
Silences, much, lately, and I have come to know. - There is
not much time left. It is late with the tide.

Maria - ~~(Suddenly terrified - her throat contracts and she speaks~~
huskily) ~~Father - no -?!~~

Will. - My Guidance is clear, daughter. -

Maria - But, father -

Will. - Thee should not feel surprised child, ~~with all thy contem-~~ *thee has*
~~plation of the universe thee cannot but expect~~ *too often not to* ~~shifting of~~ *a*
~~our spheres - and thee cannot help being confident of the~~ *not to doubt*
continuance of our destinies. -

Maria - ~~If I could only be sure in my own mind - if only? But when~~
ever since I can remember, I have ~~questioned everything~~ *it is difficult*
that could not be proved - now to be sure, ~~in my heart, of~~
something that cannot even be calculated *even* to a minimum of

doubt ~~well~~ ~~I~~ ^{questioned}

Will. - Thee has never ~~doubted~~ the earth's curve - ~~the moon's~~
~~distance from the earth~~, the orbit of ~~every~~ ^{the} stars and
planet ~~show~~ ^{question} can thee ~~doubt~~ that the curve of our lives con-
tinues as ~~the~~ ^{our} orbit traces a course beyond our sight. Thee
has seen far in/ thy life time, daughter, and I can say,
with pride, thee has done well, but thee must continue to
enlarge thy vision with faith.

Maria - Yes, father -

Will. - And thee must not forget that "brief as is our life
~~compared with infinitude of creation~~, brief as is our life
compared with cycles of time, we are so tethered to ~~all~~
the beautiful dependencies of law, that not only the
~~sparrows~~ fall is felt to the outermost bound, but the
vibrations set in motion by words we utter reach through
all space and the tremor is felt through all time. - Thee
has found no endings in thy ^{own} scientific laws has thee?

Maria - No, father -

Will. - (Looks about, out towards the window) The night sky is here,
and I feel at home - "Thee'll look for the comet to-night,
will thee not, my child?

Maria - I will, father

Will. - Thee best ~~set~~ ^{read} the chronometer, and begin. ~~thee~~

Maria - Yes, Father - (She moves slowly to Telescope and chronometer
as if in a daze)

Will. - Tell if Jupiter is here or rather there - and what of the
new double-stars thee found last night.

Maria - (Trying to focus telescope - moves away for a second to
wipe off tear from her eyes - quickly she resumes her
sweeping)
Jupiter is high, and all four moons are visible - !

(His head slips back and he dozes)

CURTAIN